

A  
CONFERENCE  
WITH A  
*JACOBITE*;  
Wherein the  
CLERGY  
OF THE

Church of ENGLAND

Are, vindicated from the Charge of  
*Hypocrisy* and *Perjury*, in Praying for  
the KING, and taking the Oaths  
of Allegiance and Abjuration.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for *J. Baker*, and *T. Warner*, at the  
*Black-Boy* in *Pater-Noster-Row*. 1716.

Price 3 *d.*

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*Jacobite, &c.*



Gentleman of good Education and Temper, but no Friend to the Revolution, lived in good Correspondence with his Neighbours; and, among the rest, with the Parson of his Parish. Indeed, there seem'd to be an entire Friendship betwixt them, till, of late, the Gentleman grew cold, and treated the Parson with much Indifferency and Reservedness: Which the Parson observing, ask'd him the Reason of it; whereupon, began the following Discourse.



*Gentleman.* Parson, I till now look'd upon thee as a *very honest* Fellow.

*Parson.* And I hope you look upon me as such still; I know not what I have said, or done, to forfeit your good Opinion.

*Gent.* I thought thou hadst been a true stanch *Tory*; but now I perceive thou art a rank *Whig*.

*Parf.* I wish, Sir, you would explain these two Words, *Whig* and *Tory*, to me: For, I declare, I know not the Meaning of them, as they are at present used. If by *Whig*, you mean one that is for pulling down *Monarchy* and *Episcopacy*; and by *Tory*, one that is for destroying the present *Establishment* in the State: I solemnly protest I am neither the one, nor the other; for I am heartily for the *Monarchy* as it is establish'd in the House of *Hanover*, and look upon *Episcopacy* as the *Primitive* Government of the Church: And, therefore, think myself obliged to do all that in me lies for the Support of Both.

*Gent.* There's it now: You are for maintaining the Succession in the House of *Hanover*.

*Parf.* And is that what you call *Whiggism*? If so, I must confess I am a *Whig*. Neither can I conceive how you should think me an *honest* Man, if I were not. Do not you know that I have taken the *Oaths*, and that I pray every Day for King *George* and the *Royal Family*.

*Gent.*



*Gent.* I thought you had done this merely to save your Bacon; I did not imagine that you had approved of these Things in your Heart.

*Parf.* You have strange Notions of *Honesty*, if you could think me an *honest* Fellow the while.

*Gent.* Why so?

*Parf.* I pray, Sir, what is an *honest* Man, but one whose Tongue and Heart go together, whose Words fairly represent his Thoughts, and, in short, doth not profess one thing, and intend another? Now could I so often, as I have done, prostrate myself before God, in the Face of his *Church*, and in the most *humble* Manner, with the most *affectionate* Expressions, and in the most *solemn* Acts of *divine* Worship, even at the *Sacrament* itself, offer up my Prayers for the King, that God would lengthen his Days, and establish his Throne, and at the same time be in the Interests of the *Pretender*? Is this, I say, consistent with *Honesty*? No certainly; it is most abominable foul *Hypocrisy*. And before I be guilty of it, may my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth, never more to be loosed.

*Gent.* You are in an Heat.

*Parf.* Why, Sir, would it not raise the Indignation of any Man living, that hath the least Regard to *Honour* and *Conscience*, to be suspected of such scandalous *Disimulation* and *Hypocrisy*? If you could think me an *honest* Man,

Man, whilst you thought me guilty of so vile a Practice, your Notions of *Good* and *Evil* are quite perverted. And if you are still of the same Mind, pray call me *Whig*, *Roundhead*, any thing in the World, rather than *honest* Man in your Sense.

*Gent.* Why so fast, Man; let us talk a little coolly. For my part, I see, and pity the Hardships you of the Clergy lie under. I know you must use the Forms prescribed you: For if you do not, the Court will have you by the Back, and shake you to Pieces. And whilst you are under such a Force, I can hardly blame you, if you comply a little beyond your Judgments and Inclinations.

*Parf.* And do you really think, that for Fear of the Court, I have all this while acted against my Conscience? I am sorry you should entertain so unworthy an Opinion of me. Had I so done, I must have been one of the vilest Creatures upon the Face of God's Earth. How abominably must I have prevaricated with God and Man? Had I been guilty of so much Wickedness, certainly my Church would, ere this Time, have dropp'd upon my Head, and crush'd me in the midst of my *damnable* Devotion. But, Sir, you have been mistaken: For I never did, I never durst, offer one Prayer to God, to which I could not in my Heart say, *Amen*. And to convince you that I have been always sincere in my *publick* Prayers, I assure

sure you, I have constantly offer'd up the same Prayers, or Prayers to the same Effect, in my *Family* and *Closet*, where no Fears of any Court could influence me. You think, I warrant you, that I took the *Oaths* too against my Conscience.

*Gent.* I crave your Pardon, Parson, if I thought amiss. But, to be plain with you, I did really think so.

*Parf.* What a vile Creature have you made of me? What Occasion have I ever given you to take me for so cursed a Reprobate? And whilst you had such an Opinion of me, how durst you at any Time come near me? Were you not afraid, every Time I set my Foot within your Doors, lest the House should tumble upon our Heads, or that the Ground should open, and swallow us up? *St. John* durst not stay under the same Roof with the Heretick *Cerintus*, lest he should be crush'd by the fall of it; but had I been as wicked in Reality, as in your Opinion, *Cerintus* had, in Comparison of me, been a Saint: For what *Heresy* can there be so heinous and provoking, as wilful and deliberate *Perjury*?

*Gent.* Right, as wilful and deliberate *Perjury*. But all the World knows, that these Oaths are not of your *Choosing*, but of the Government's *Imposing*; and this too with such Penalties, that, had you refused them, you must



must have been ruined. The Fault, therefore, lies in the *Government*, not in *You*.

*Parf.* An unlawful Oath then, according to you, is the Sin of the *Imposer*, and not of the *Taker*. This is a Piece of *Hudibras's* Divinity, and of him I suppose you learn'd it. It deserves no Answer, but Laughter. But, to be serious with you, had we not Time given us to deliberate before we were obliged to take the Oaths? And might we not have refused them, if in our Consciences we had thought them *unlawful*? Our Taking them, therefore, was *wilful* and *deliberate*; and in as many as took them against their Consciences, if any did so, the Taking of them was *wilful* and *deliberate* Perjury.

*Gent.* How could it be *wilful* in them, whilst they were under so great a *Force*, that either they must take them, or be utterly undone?

*Parf.* Had they Nothing to balance that *Force*? Ought not the *third Commandment*, and the dreadful Penalty annex'd to it, to have weigh'd with them as much, nay much more, than any *Commandment* of *Man*, and any *worldly Penalties*, how severe soever? Be not afraid of them that kill the *Body*, saith Christ, and after that, have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which, after he hath killed, hath Power to cast into Hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him, Luke xii. 4, 5. As to what you say,

ay of a Man's being *utterly undone*: This is impossible, so long as he keeps a good Conscience; How should a Man be *undone* whilst he carries the Hopes of Heaven about him? For my Part, I believe Nothing *utterly undoes* a Man, but Damnation.

*Gent.* No; not tho' he be deprived of his livelihood, and all Means of Subsistence?

*Parf.* This is, indeed, to be *undone* in the sense of mere Worldlings: But whosoever lives in the Faith and Fear of God, hath other notions: He knows that it is even a *Blessing* to be *persecuted* for Righteousness Sake, *Mat.* 5. 10, 11. and therefore is not to be over-ruled by any Terrors of this World, so far as wilfully to commit the least Sin, much less to take an *Oath* contrary to his Conscience; a Sin of the *deepest* dye, and threaten'd, by God, with the *severest* Vengeance. Who- ever, therefore, commits it, tho' it were to save his Life, can be no true Disciple of *Christ*, since he loves this *World* more than *Him*, chuses to obey *Men* rather than *GOD*; and, in short, believes neither *Law* nor *Gospel* to any Purpose. And what can such a Wretch expect, but the dreadfulest *Wrath*, and *Damnation* to the very Pit of Hell?

*Gent.* God forbid.

*Parf.* If there be any Truth in the Word of God, it cannot be otherwise. Were Worldly Penalties a sufficient Justification  
B for

for the doing that which God hath forbidden, what Ignoramus's were the whole Army of *Martyrs*, who, rather than break one of God's Commandments, chose Death with Torments? How many of them might have saved their Lives, if they would have done but so much as the throwing a little Frankincense upon an Heathen Altar? And yet they refused it.

*Gent.* Good Reason why; for, in so doing, they had interpretatively deny'd *Christ*.

*Parf.* And he that takes a *false Oath*, doth in Effect deny God, and his Providence: The greater Sin, if possible.

*Gent.* The more they to blame, who put Men to unlawful Oaths.

*Parf.* True: But that is not the present Case: For the Oaths we speak of are not in themselves *unlawful*; How then is the Government to be blamed for imposing them? In Times of such *Difficulty* and *Danger* as these are, it is but reasonable, that the King should have all just Assurance of the *Fidelity* of his Subjects: And what Assurance can there be greater, than that of an *Oath*? tho' (with Trembling and Sorrow of Heart I speak it) even this is sunk to little or nothing among us. Such is the general Corruption of Mens Principles and Morals, that the Reverence due to an *Oath* is almost lost: And with Submission to better Judgments, I am persuaded



persuaded, that nothing has render'd Oaths more contemptible, than the *Frequency* of exacting them, and the *careless, irreverent* Way of administering them, especially in Courts of Justice. Were I worthy to give Advice in this Matter, an Oath should never be administer'd, but in Cases of *absolute* Necessity; and when administer'd, it should be with all Reverence possible: For, since it is a most solemn Act of *Divine Worship*, wherein the *Holy and Reverend* Name of GOD is invoked: In all Courts Silence should be enjoyn'd during the Administration; and the whole *Bench*, rising off their Seats, should stand *bare* all the while. This might be one Means to reduce the People to that *awful* Regard which is due to Oaths; without which they can be of no good Use, and are imposed in vain. For until Men are brought to a just Sense of the *Sacredness* of an Oath, and of their Obligations to *Truth* and *Fidelity* in what they swear; they will, notwithstanding their Oaths, be altogether seduced by their *Inclinations* and *Interests*: And, in such a Case, a Parliament cannot spend its Time to less Purpose, than in con-  
firming Oaths to secure the Loyalty of the People.

*Gent.* Truly I don't know what it can signify to impose Oaths, especially with so great Penalties: For, *Juramentum vi &*

*metu extortum non est obligatorium, i. e. An Oath, extorted by Force and Fear, lays no Obligation.*

*Parf.* God defend us from the Devil and all his Works. From whence, I beseech you, had you that *Maxim*?

*Gent.* It is not the first Time, I suppose, that you have heard it.

*Parf.* I confess that; but I declare withal, that it is most abominably false, and so unworthy of a *Christian*, that it hath been condemn'd, even by *Heathens*. When *M. Pomponius*, the Tribune, had accused *La Manlius*, *Manlius's* Son comes to him, and, drawing his Sword, swears he would kill him upon the Spot, if he did not give him his Oath to let fall the Prosecution of his Father. *Pomponius*, constrain'd by this Terror, swears accordingly; And thereupon, relating the whole Matter to the People, says, He could not possibly carry on the Prosecution against *Manlius* any farther; whereupon the Cause was dismissed. Such *Reverence*, saith *Cicero*, who tells us the Story, *Offic. l. 3.* had Men then for an Oath. And is it not a Shame, that Men should have less now? that *Christians* should have less Regard for the true God, than *Heathens* had for their Idols? Certainly they shall rise up in the Judgment with

with this Generation, and shall condemn it. But, I pray Sir, in what Case can you suppose this Position to hold good?

Gent. In Case the *Matter* of the Oath be *unlawful*, it holds most certainly.

Parf. I grant it doth so. But then the Reason why it obligeth not, lieth not in the *Force* imposing it; but in the *Unlawfulness* of its *Matters*. For an *Unlawful* Oath, tho' never so *freely* and *voluntarily* taken, obligeth to nothing, but Repentance for the taking it. What think you in Case the *Matter* of the Oath be *lawful*? Is not a Man obliged then?

Gent. I know not what to say to that.

Parf. I say then, that an Oath concerning a *Lawful* Matter doth oblige, altho' a Man be induced by *Force* and *Fear* to take it. And for this I have the Authority of Bishop *Sanderson*, v. *de Juram. oblig. Prædict.* S. 14, &c. In short, it is a general Rule with me, that an *Unlawful* Oath ought in no Case to be taken; and a *Lawful* Oath ought in all Cases to be kept.

Gent. And do you really think the present Oaths to be *Lawful*?

Parf. I do really so think: Had I thought otherwise, I would never have taken them.

Gent. Do not you think the Pretender is King *James's* Son?

Parf.



*Parf.* I very much doubt it at least. If he were so, his Parents were very unkind to him, in giving no better Proof of it.

*Gent.* What better Proof could they give, than was given in the Affidavits made and publish'd concerning his Birth?

*Parf.* They might at least have suffer'd the *Princess* to have been present, and to have seen him come into the World. This Evidence had been more than all the Affidavits; which, to the best of my Remembrance, come not fully up to the Point. This Evidence was given to the next Heir of the *French* Crown, at the Birth of the late *French* King. And for what Reason was not the same given to the Heirs of the *British* Crown, if the same could have been given? The Court knew well enough what Jealousies the Nation was in about it, and what Apprehensions it had of an *Impostor*. Ought not then the Birth to have been as publick and notorious, as, with all possible Decency, it might have been? When *Ogna*, Wife to *Baldwyn*, Earl of *Flanders*, a Lady of about Fifty Years of Age, was Breeding; the Earl perceiving that the People suspected the Truth of it, caused a Pavilion to be erected, in the Market-Place of *Arras*, for her to be deliver'd in, and admitted

admitted all the Women of Fashion to the labour. The like was done by *Henry the Emperor*, at the Birth of his Son *Frederick*, by *Constance*, Queen of *Naples*. Why did not *King James* do something of this Nature? There was as much Occasion for his so doing, as for either of the others. But, instead of that, Things were so managed, as even to give Cause of Suspicion. I remember very well how the News vary'd every Post about the Place design'd for this great Birth: Soon it was to be at *Windsor*, soon at *Richmond*; soon at this Place, soon at that. At last, an Apartment was fitted up in all Hast at *St. James's*, convenient for nothing but the Execution of an *Impostor*; and for this it was, indeed, as convenient as possible. I remember, too, how cock-sure the *Papists* were of a young Prince, all the Time the Queen was said to be Breeding. I then thought they were resolved to have one; and they had one accordingly: Whether they came honestly by him, or not, I can't tell.

*Gent.* Then, it seems, you yourself don't know but that the *Pretender* was the legitimate Son of *King James*. How then could you swear that he hath no manner of *Right* and *Title* to this Crown?

*Parf.*

*Parf.* In all Controversies of Right, that which appears not, is not: And it lies upon the Pretender to make his Legitimacy appear, before any Right founded thereupon is to be acknowledged. But, to be plain with you, I care not whose Son he is. Let him be King James's, or whose he will, he hath no Right to the British Crown that I know of.

*Gent.* That's strange: Is not the Crown Hereditary with us?

*Parf.* Yes; and what then?

*Gent.* Why then, if the Pretender be King James's Son, he must have a Right, as next Heir at Law.

*Parf.* At what Law? Divine, or Humane? If by Divine Law, it must be either Reveald or Natural. If by Reveald, let him prove it by some Text of Scripture, if he can.

*Gent.* Pshaw, that's a Jest: But the Law of Nature requires, that the Son should succeed to the Father's Inheritance; and among Sons, you know there is a Right of Primogeniture.

*Parf.* And are all Deviations from this Rule Unnatural? Then the Custom of Gavelkind, whereby the eldest Son hath no larger a Share of the Father's Lands than the youngest, is, it seems, Unnatural. And



the Custom of *Borow English* must be yet more *Unnatural*; since by this the youngest son goes away with all.

*Gent.* These concern only *private* Inheritances; and what are these to *Crowns* and *Principalities*?

*Parf.* And how, I pray, doth *Nature* interest itself more in the Succession to *Crowns*, than to *private* Estates? Not at all that I know of.

*Gent.* But all the World knows, that the Crown of *England* is *Hereditary*.

*Parf.* I grant it: And it is so by the *Common Law* of *England*; which always takes place, where it is not set aside by the *Statute Law*.

*Gent.* Can a *Statute Law* then set aside the *Common Law* in this Case.

*Parf.* Yes, most certainly. In *Henry VIIIth's* Time there were no less than three several Acts made to *limit* the Succession of the Crown: In the two last whereof the King was empowered to assure the Reversion of the Crown, upon Failure of his own Issue, to whomsoever he would; neither was there in these Acts any regard had to the Issue of his *Sister*, in whom the Reversion was by the *Common Law*.

*Gent.* It is true, indeed, such Acts were then made: But did not that King and his Parliaments assume a greater Authority in this Case than they really had? *A Facto ad*  
*us non valet consequentia.*

C

*Parf.*

*Parf.* It is not for you and me to ask Sovereign Powers by what Authority they do these Things. Kings and Parliaments are supposed to understand their own Authority best. Neither is there any Cause why you should imagine they went beyond their Bounds in this Matter. The *Lineal Succession* to the Crown is, as I have already observ'd to you, founded on the *Common Law*. Now *Common Law* is nothing but ancient *Custom*; and *Custom*, consider'd merely as such, is of no binding Force; but derives all its Strength from the Authority of the present *Legislature*, which is supposed to establish it, so long as it consents to the open and notorious Use of it: So that, whenever the *Legislature* expresses its Dissent to any Custom by a contrary Statute, that Custom is of no Force at all. Thus in the Statute, 13 *Elizab. c. 1.* it is asserted, that the *Common Laws, not alter'd by Parliament, ought to direct the Right of this Crown*; and yet the same Statute makes it *High Treason* in any one to say, that the *Queen, with her Parliament, was not able to make Laws and Statutes of sufficient Force and Validity to limit and bind the Crown of this Realm, and the Descent and Inheritance thereof.* And, what is worth your Observation, this Statute was made,

says

says the learned *Cambden, ex veterum Legum Autoritate.*

Now from hence I argue, that since the Succession to the Crown may, according to our Constitution, be *limited* by Statute, and it is by Statute actually *limited* to the House of *Hanover*; all other Pretences to it are effectually set aside; and whatever Right other Persons might formerly have had, it is now utterly *extinct*.

*Gent.* But pray consider by whom these Statutes, that limit the Crown to the House of *Hanover*, were made, even by those, who themselves were Kings and Queens *de facto* only, and not *de jure*.

*Parf.* You make here a Distinction, where the Laws, as I conceive, make none. A Prince invested with the Regal Authority, and acknowledged by the States of the Realm, is King with us to all *Intents* and *Purposes*, and the Laws made by him are of full *Force* and *Validity*; otherwise, we might burn one half of our Statute-book, as so much waste Paper, since the whole of it consists of Statutes made by Princes, whose Titles to the Crown were inconsistent, and several of their Pretences to it not near so justifiable as those of King *William* and Queen *Mary*.

*Gent.* What Title, I pray, could they have, during King *Jame's* Life at least?



*Parf.* King *James* himself had destroy'd his *Royal Character* (without which his *natural Life* is of no Moment in this Case) before the Crown was set upon King *William* and Queen *Mary's* Heads.

*Gent.* How so? He never renounced his Title to the Crown.

*Parf.* The Monarchy of *England* is a legal Monarchy. Now King *James*, by a continued Course of *Arbitrary Proceedings*, trampled our Laws under his Foot, and so did, in Effect, renounce the Authority the Laws gave him; and, instead of that, set up for an *Absolute Power*, utterly inconsistent with our Constitution. Whether, by so doing, he did not virtually renounce the *English Government*, is a Question I shall not at present engage in. This I am confident of, that in leaving the Kingdom, as he did, he voluntarily deserted it.

*Gent.* How can you say he voluntarily deserted, when he was driven away by Force?

*Parf.* What Cause of Fear had he? He had Forces enough about him to have defended him from any *secret Violence*. And as for any *open Violence*, his Person was secure enough from that: For, this must have proceeded either from the *Parliament* he was then calling, or from the *Prince*

of *Orange*. He could not fear it from the  
*Parliament*, since every Member of it must,  
 immediately upon their sitting down, have  
 taken the Oath of *Allegiance* to him: And  
 can any one imagine, that so honourable  
 a Body, as that is, would so basely, so hei-  
 nously, have perjur'd itself; have taken an  
 Oath one Day, with a Purpose to break it  
 the very next? And as for the *Prince*, the  
 King knew him to be of a *generous, heroick,*  
*and gracious Spirit*; and this he himself o-  
 penly declared, after his Rout at the *Boyne*.  
 How then could he apprehend any Danger  
 from him, considering withal his near Alli-  
 ance to him both by *Blood* and *Marriage*?  
 Besides, the *Prince's* own chief Dependance  
 was upon his Brother-in-Law Prince  
*George*, the Duke of *Ormond*, and others of  
 the *Nobility* and *Gentry* which had joyn'd  
 him, most of them Persons of distinguish'd  
*Loyalty*. And can it be supposed that these  
 would not have withstood him in so *unnatu-*  
*ral* an Attempt? King *James* therefore was  
 safe enough as to any Violence that might  
 be offer'd to his Person; so that if he fled  
 for Fear, he was the errant'st Coward that  
 ever breath'd. Farther yet, if he durst  
 not trust his own *Person* any longer among  
 us, why did he not commission some Body  
 other to *represent* him?

*Gent.*

*Gent.* Who durst have accepted such a Commission?

*Parf.* What Danger would any Body have incurr'd by accepting it, provided they were *legally* qualify'd for it? However, he might have try'd, at least, whether any one would have accepted it or not. But, in short, he durst trust no Body that was *legally* qualify'd with such a Commission, lest they should, in three or four Days, have undone all that, which he, contrary to his *Oaths* and *Promises*, had been labouring at for four Years together. He could not endure that we should be secur'd from *Popery* and *Slavery*; the introducing of which lay so near his Heart, that, rather than throw it up, he chose to withdraw, and, in so doing, he *dissolved* the Government, and threw us into an *Anarchy*: And a Nation once reduced to such a State, may cast itself into what *Form* of Government it sees fit. Wherefore, since this Nation, being reduced to that State, settled the Crown upon King *William* and Queen *Mary's* Heads, they had as good a Title to it as King *James* himself ever had, consequently Queen *Anne* had the same, and so hath King *George*, God bless him. Come, Sir, here's his Health to you.

*Gent.*



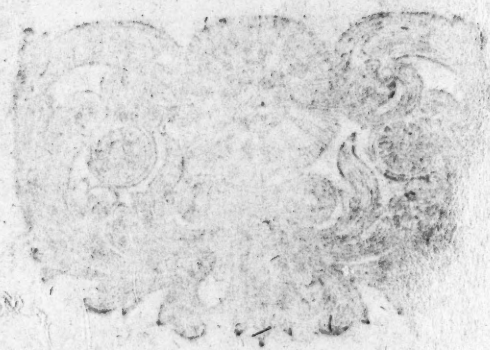
*Gent.* Nay, stay Parson, we must have more Words than one to that Bargain. Pray give me Time to consider of this Doctrine of yours first.

*Parf.* I pray, Sir, do. Consider what I have said without *Prejudice* or *Partiality*. And if you have any Objections to make, let me desire you to communicate them the next Time we meet. In the mean while bid you farewell.



**E I N I S.**

( 11 )  
I have to say that I have  
no objection to the  
use of the word "Bible"  
in the title of the  
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